

Message Text

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ACTION L-03

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TAGS: ECOSOC, UN, PORG
SUBJECT: 1978 SUMMER ECOSOC: ITEM 10 - RESTRUCTURING

REF: (A) STATE 181359; (B) GENEVA 11000

1. AT LAST WEEK'S THIRD INFORMAL SESSION OF THE FIRST (ECONOMIC) COMMITTEE ON RESTRUCTURING, USDEL MADE ITS FIRST PITCH TO PROMOTE THE IDEA OF OPERATION BY CONSENSUS IN SESSIONAL COMMITTEES OF SUBJECT-ORIENTED SESSIONS (SOS) OF ECOSOC SO AS TO AVOID POSSIBLE VIOLATION OF CHARTER ARTICLE 69. SO FAR THERE HAS BEEN NO FAVORABLE RESPONSE EITHER IN THE INFORMAL SESSION ITSELF OR IN SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATIONS, PERHAPS PARTLY BECAUSE OF THE NEWNESS OF THE IDEA.

2. OUR PITCH FOLLOWED A RESTATEMENT BY THE JAMAICAN REP OF THE G-77 POSITION FAVORING AN EXPANSION OF SOS SESSIONAL COMMITTEES TO 75 RATHER THAN MAKING THEM OPEN-ENDED AS VARIOUS WESTERN COUNTRIES (INCLUDING EC-9, JAPAN, CANADA AND OTHERS) HAD ADVOCATED.

3. USDEL STATED WE COULD SEE SOME ADVANTAGE IN HAVING
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A DEFINED NUMBER SO AS TO LIMIT THE EXPANSION AND SO THAT WE WOULD ALL KNOW WHAT WE WERE DEALING WITH. HOWEVER, THESE WERE OUTWEIGHED BY THE DISADVANTAGES OF A COMPLEX, TWO-TIERED ELECTORAL SYSTEM TO ELECT FIRST-CLASS AND SECOND-CLASS MEMBERS/PARTICIPANTS, WITH FURTHER COMPLICATIONS ARISING WITH THE NEED FOR BY-ELECTIONS WHENEVER SECOND-CLASS PARTICIPANTS ARE ELECTED TO FIRST-

CLASS MEMBERSHIP. WE ALSO QUESTIONED THE PROPOSED DISTRIBUTION OF ADDITIONAL SEATS. WE THEREFORE REITERATED OUR PREFERENCE FOR THE OPEN-ENDED FORMULA, WITH THE REQUIREMENT THAT COUNTRIES SIGNIFY THEIR INTENTION IN ADVANCE AND ACCREDIT DELEGATIONS.

4. USDEL THEN RAISED THE PROBLEM WE HAVE OVER THE POSSIBLE CONTRAVENTION OF CHARTER ARTICLE 69 AUTHORIZING ECOSOC TO INVITE OTHER UN MEMBERS TO PARTICIPATE WITHOUT VOTE. WE THEREFORE SUGGESTED ACTION IN SOS SESSIONAL COMMITTEES BY CONSENSUS ONLY (I.E. IN RECOMMENDING ACTIONS BY PLENARY), CONFINING ANY VOTING TO PLENARY IN CASES WHERE A CONSENSUS CANNOT BE REACHED IN COMMITTEE.

5. JAMAICAN REP'S RESPONSE TO THE CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTION WAS TO CITE THE FACT THAT, DURING THE INTERVAL BETWEEN ADOPTION AND ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE CHARTER AMENDMENT INCREASING THE SIZE OF ECOSOC FROM 27 TO 54, ECOSOC TOOK IT ON ITSELF TO INCREASE THE SIZE OF ITS SESSIONAL COMMITTEES TO 54. HE THEREFORE SAW NO IMPEDIMENT TO AGAIN PERMITTING VOTING IN ENLARGED SESSIONAL COMMITTEES. HE REITERATED G-77 PREFERENCE FOR AN INCREASE BY A SPECIFIC NUMBER AND SAW NO PROBLEM WITH A TWO-TIERED ELECTORAL SYSTEM, FIRST IN THE GA AND SECOND IN THE ORGANIZATIONAL SESSION OF ECOSOC AS IN THE CASE OF ELECTIONS TO ECOSOC COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS. (ANOTHER ALTERNATIVE MENTIONED BY SOME LDCS IS A "COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE" APPROACH, OBTAINING THE NEED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FOR AN ADVANCE STATEMENT OF INTENT TO PARTICIPATE AND HENCE MAKING IT POSSIBLE FOR THE G-77 TO DRUM UP MORE SUPPORTERS ON CALL IF NEEDED. IN ANY CASE, IT REMAINS OUR IMPRESSION THAT THE G-77 ARE NOT LOCKED INTO THE FIXED NUMBER APPROACH.)

6. COMMENT: WE DOUBT IF WE CAN MAKE MUCH HEADWAY WITH THE CONSENSUS IDEA, AS EVEN OUR WESTERN FRIENDS SEEM SKEPTICAL. WE WILL NEVERTHELESS PURSUE IT A BIT FURTHER. (QUESTION: WOULD A SINGLE SECOND-CLASS PARTICIPANT BE ALLOWED TO BLOCK A CONSENSUS?) THE G-77'S DISLIKE OF THE OPEN-ENDED APPROACH MAY WELL BE BASED ON THE FEAR THAT PRACTICALLY ALL DCS BUT RELATIVELY FEW LDCS WOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS, WHILE A SET NUMBER WOULD SERVE TO LIMIT ADDITIONAL DC PARTICIPATION, PARTICULARLY THE NUMBERS PROPOSED BY THE G-77 (19 LDCS, ONE WEO, ONE EE).

7. AS A FOOTNOTE TO REFTTEL B, WE SHOULD ADD THAT THE ONLY INSTANCES WHERE ACTION IN A SESSIONAL COMMITTEE WOULD BE FINAL WOULD OCCUR IN CASES WHERE PROPOSALS ARE DEFEATED, THUS FORECLOSING REFERENCE TO PLENARY. VANDEN HEUVEL

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